

LA CUEVA MILL  
La Cueva  
Santa Fe County  
New Mexico

HAER NM-24  
*HAER NM-24*

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

### LA CUEVA MILL

HAER No. NM-24

**Location:** La Cueva, Mora County, New Mexico

**Date of Construction:** ca. 1850s

**Original Owner, Use:** Unknown, milling-flour

**Current Owner, Use:** Private, not in use

**Significance:** The La Cueva Mill is one of the earliest mills in New Mexico. It was closely associated with Fort Union and the town of Las Vegas and played an important role in the early days of the Territory.

**Description:** The mill is located in the Mora Valley in northern New Mexico, about 20 miles north of Las Vegas, New Mexico, at the intersection of New Mexico highways 3 and 21. Water was taken from the Mora River and carried by a canal to the massive three-story mill, which was constructed of native stone and adobe brick. Water was delivered above an overshot wheel by a steel flume.

**History:** The mill was originally constructed to provide flour for Fort Union, located 15 miles to the east. The mill remained in operation until the 1920s, when it fell idle. In the mid-1930s, it was reactivated and more modern milling equipment was installed. However, the mill again fell into disuse in 1949 and remains in fair condition.

#### Sources:

Beck, Lois. "The Old Mills." *New Mexico Magazine* XLVI, no. 3 (March 1968): 22-25.

Frizell, Joseph P. "The Old-Time Waterwheels of America." *Transactions of the American Society of Civil Engineers* XXVIII, no. 589 (April 1893): 237-249.

Wilson, Herbert M. "Pumping Water for Irrigation." Water-Supply and Irrigation Paper No. 1, U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1846.

**Historians:** Steve Rae, T. Lindsay Baker, and Joseph E. Minor, July 13 and September 22, 1971

**Project Information:** The La Cueva Mill was inventoried for the Historic American Engineering Record as part of the Southwest Water Resources Project, a joint project with the Texas Tech Water Resources Center. The survey was subsequently published as *Water for the Southwest: Historical Survey and Guide to Historic Sites* by the American Society of Civil Engineers in September 1973.